

78B-1-137 Witnesses -- Privileged communications.

There are particular relations in which it is the policy of the law to encourage confidence and to preserve it inviolate. Therefore, a person cannot be examined as a witness in the following cases:

- (1)
 - (a) Neither a wife nor a husband may either during the marriage or afterwards be, without the consent of the other, examined as to any communication made by one to the other during the marriage.
 - (b) This exception does not apply:
 - (i) to a civil action or proceeding by one spouse against the other;
 - (ii) to a criminal action or proceeding for a crime committed by one spouse against the other;
 - (iii) to the crime of deserting or neglecting to support a spouse or child;
 - (iv) to any civil or criminal proceeding for abuse or neglect committed against the child of either spouse; or
 - (v) if otherwise specifically provided by law.
- (2) An attorney cannot, without the consent of the client, be examined as to any communication made by the client to the attorney or any advice given regarding the communication in the course of the professional employment. An attorney's secretary, stenographer, or clerk cannot be examined, without the consent of the attorney, concerning any fact, the knowledge of which has been acquired as an employee.
- (3) A member of the clergy or priest cannot, without the consent of the person making the confession, be examined as to any confession made to either of them in their professional character in the course of discipline enjoined by the church to which they belong.
- (4) A physician or surgeon cannot, without the consent of the patient, be examined in a civil action as to any information acquired in attending the patient which was necessary to enable the physician or surgeon to prescribe or act for the patient. However, this privilege shall be waived by the patient in an action in which the patient places the patient's medical condition at issue as an element or factor of the claim or defense. Under those circumstances, a physician or surgeon who has prescribed for or treated that patient for the medical condition at issue may provide information, interviews, reports, records, statements, memoranda, or other data relating to the patient's medical condition and treatment which are placed at issue.
- (5) A public officer cannot be examined as to communications made in official confidence when the public interests would suffer by the disclosure.
- (6) A sexual assault counselor as defined in Section 77-38-203 cannot, without the consent of the victim, be examined in a civil or criminal proceeding as to any confidential communication as defined in Section 77-38-203 made by the victim.

Renumbered and Amended by Chapter 3, 2008 General Session